

State Music Competition

Three Chambersburg Area Senior High School students have been selected to participate in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association All-State Festival in Hershey, March 31 to April 2.

Hayden Johnson, sophomore, will participate in state band, while juniors Elary Mede and Marisabel Cordova will participate in state chorus.

Each of them topped many of their peers from around the state through district and regional competitions that helped them win a place at the state band and chorus performances. All three students turned to music early in their school careers.



"I'm just really, really happy that I made it," Elary said. "I grew up singing in the church choir and I've been in chorus since sixth grade. This is something I love doing."

Marisabel, who has been in chorus since third grade, shares those sentiments. "I use to listen for the ice cream truck when I was little. I didn't want the ice cream, I just wanted to listen to the music," she said.

Hayden, who also made District band in 7th, 8th, and 9th grades, will be the first-chair percussionist during the state band performance. He said he began playing in band as a percussionist in the fifth grade. It was a choice between band and basketball. Apparently it was a great choice.

"I was Hayden's band instructor in fifth grade and I recognized his talent early on," said Nicole Albright, music instructor.

To make it all the way to the state competition, the students first had to compete against students in the 717 area code region. They then went onto regionals.

Auditions for districts, regional, or states are based on a student's ability to perform in a blind audition; this is a type of audition in which neither the performer nor the judge sees each other. At the district level in January and regional level in March, the students had to perform audition pieces selected for them. Choral students had nine days to prepare nine songs. Musical pieces were released to all participants at the exact time. Judges could select any of the nine songs to be performed.

How did the students feel once they found out they made it to states?

"I felt pretty good about the audition. But, I couldn't believe it when I saw my name on the list. I cried," said Elary.

Marisabel, who was ranked as the 1st soprano in the state as a result of the competition, said, "I knew it would be God's will if I were to make it. I thought I did well, but you just never know."

Hayden, on the other hand, wasn't so sure how it was going to turn out. "I didn't think I did real well. When I found out I made it, I couldn't believe it," he said.